

HISTORY: NORTHWEST ST. HELENS ROAD BETWEEN
THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD BRIDGE AND ST. JOHNS BRIDGE

INTRODUCTION

Archaeological research has revealed the earliest inhabitants to the Pacific Northwest migrated during the last ice age from Asia to North America about 10,000 years ago. These people settled along the coast and inland rivers. Over thousands of years these aborigines lived in a stone age culture of hunters and gatherers. Due to their isolation, different customs emerged with each village and tribe. They spoke their own Chinookan language and dialect and it was difficult for these people to communicate with other tribes. Coastal and inland Indians of Western Oregon enjoyed an unusually rich environment. Food was abundant. The land was covered with dense forest of fir, hemlock, and cedar from which they obtained shelter, utensils and clothing. Hollowed out logs became canoes providing transportation. (1)

In April, 1806, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, upon their return up the Columbia River from wintering at Fort Clatsop, were the first white men to enter the Willamette River. The area is described as covered with trees, with game plentiful, mostly deer and elk. The Indians residing on Sauvie Island (Wapato Island) called the river "Multnomah." "Fir is the common growth of the uplands. The river provides fish and abundant flowering plants. The land is very fertile." (2)

The Indians were subject to disease and the entire Multnomah Village died from a pestilence between 1829 and 1831. (3)

DISPUTED TERRITORY

From 1818 to 1846, the boundaries of the Oregon Country were disputed between Great Britain and the United States. The Hudson Bay Company established Fort Vancouver and the fur trade in 1824, maintaining jurisdiction over British subjects. American missionaries and settlers were outside United States jurisdiction and, hence outside the law. Attracted by the fertile land, settlers began arriving from Missouri to the Willamette Valley in 1843. An Oregon Provisional Government was established in 1843, dividing the Oregon Country into counties. The territory north of the 45th parallel and west of the Willamette River was designated Tualatin County. (4) As early as 1838, Senator Lewis F. Linn from Missouri introduced bills into Congress advocating the occupation of Oregon and free land for settlers. In January, 1841, Senator Linn again introduced a joint resolution in both the Senate and the House "to occupy, settle, grant lands and extend certain laws of the United States to the Oregon Country." Congress took no action. (5) Finally, on September 29, 1850, assuming the surrender of Indian title to their land, Congress passed the Donation Land Law. Under this law, a one-half section or 320 acres was granted to every male settler over the age of 18, who was a U.S. citizen and who had occupied and cultivated his land for four consecutive years before December 1, 1850. The law was designed to settle land disputes in the Oregon Country. (6)

EARLY SETTLERS

Milton Doane and William W. Baker established Donation Land Claims on land between the present St. Johns and Burlington Northern Railroad Bridges. These recorded documents reveal Milton Doane settled parts of Sections 12, 13, 14, and 24 in Township One, North of Range One...near the present day St. Johns Bridge. The deed awarded the land to Elizabeth Doane and the heirs at law of Milton Doane, deceased. Certificate 1392 dated 8 March, 1866, and signed by President Andrew Johnson, is recorded in the Deed Records, General Land Office, Volume 3, Pages 387-388. The Oregon Donation Land Act recognized women's part in pioneering by allowing wives the uncommon privilege of holding real property in their own names. (7)

William W. Baker's 640 acre Donation Land Claim was deposited in the General Land Office of the United States, Certificate No. 2772, Oregon City, and was signed by President Andrew Johnson. This was verified by viewing the document.

TOWNSITES - SPRINGVILLE

The townsite of Springville under the west end of the St. Johns Bridge was named for a well known spring on the slope of the hills to the west of the town. The place was near the old St. Johns ferry landing and just north of the present bridge. (8) In 1859, William W. Baker sold a portion of his Donation Land Claim, including a wharf at the terminus of the Tualatin Road known as Baker's Landing, to Croesus B. Comstock and Lafayette Scoggins. Comstock built a store and Scoggins, a grain buyer and general merchant, established a warehouse, which served as a wheat shipping point for farmers to the Tualatin Valley and the North Plains of Washington County. Comstock and the valley farmers opened a road across the Tualatin Mountains to Springville. By 1860, a rivalry existed between Portland, further down river, and St. Helens, upriver, for the areas trade. Springville did not attain metropolitan size because it was not at the head of navigation. The Springville Road from Tualatin was a favored route to the Willamette River. With the improving and widening of S.W. Canyon Road, this enabled ships to take on cargo at Portland. When the West Side Railroad (Oregon Central) was opened, the Springville Road fell into disuse. (9) Springville's first post office was established February 27, 1860, with C.B. Comstock the first postmaster. In 1872, a fire destroyed most of Springville, and on April 14, 1873, the post office was discontinued. (10) Today, this site, just south of the present town of Linnton, is within the Portland City Limits.

WILLBRIDGE

The townsite of Willbridge was platted and existed for only a short time. Little material is available on the site. Willbridge exists today as a railroad switching point in Northwest Portland.

LINNTON

The Great Migration of 1843 brought Peter Hardeman Burnett, a Missouri attorney, and Morton Matthew McCarver, a Kentuckian, to Oregon. (11) They laid out the townsite of Linnton in 1843-1844, naming the site after Senator Lewis F. Linn from Missouri. "All towns are laid out upon the water. This place is on the west bank of the Willamette (sp) River, four miles about its mouth..." (12) The site was selected because they considered this area to be the head of ship navigation on the Willamette. "General M. McCalla (M.M. McCarver) is a gentleman from Iowa Territory and laid out Burlington, the seat of government... I have no doubt but that this place will be the great commercial town of the Territory..." (13) McCarver and Burnett opened a wagon road (Springville Road) across the hills to the Tualatin Valley. They soon discovered the town was not the head of ship navigation on the Willamette. After losing money in their town speculation, they moved from the area. Burnett later traveled to California, becoming the state's first governor. (14) In 1843, James John came to Oregon. The following year he bought a town lot and built a warehouse. He later moved across the Willamette River to found the town of St. Johns. In 1852, he operated a ferry connecting St. Johns and Linnton. (15)

Solomon Richards settled in Linnton in 1846 and was given a Donation Land Claim of 640 acres on the present townsite on September 27, 1850. He sold the right of way through his property on January 16, 1883, to the railroad. In April, 1889, Richards sold 18 acres along the river to Aaron Meier, and 100 acres to C.F. Bunker and William Selover. Bunker platted and dedicated the town of Linnton on April 13, 1889. On October 30, 1889, Bunker and Selover sold river property to Portland Smelting and Refining Corporation. The major businesses established between 1900-1910 were Portland Gas and Coke Company, Standard Oil Distribution Station, Clark and Wilson Lumber Company, West Oregon Lumber Company, and Willamette Box and Lumber Company. Linnton was incorporated as a city January 1, 1910, and was annexed to the City of Portland on July 8, 1915. (16)

RAILROAD

In 1853, Washington Territorial Governor, Isaac Ingalls Stevens, undertook a survey for the Northern Pacific Railroad. The survey stimulated railroad schemes in the Oregon Territory. The Territorial Legislature, between 1847 and 1853, appointed a commission to locate a military wagon road through the coast range to Astoria. Money was appropriated by Congress and by the Oregon Legislature at various times from 1855 through 1872, but the survey was never completed. Ben Halladay, Oregon's first great railroad builder, had at his disposal a large land grant for the line from Portland to Astoria. He lost his fortune in the 1873 economic depression. Henry Villard, builder of the Northern Pacific Railroad, determined the cost to complete the line to Astoria to be \$50,000.00 per mile. This route was abandoned due to the cost. He did complete the Northern Pacific route from Portland to Goble in 1883. Financial backing was secured in 1893 by New York and London capitalists to complete the line but a economic depression halted construction. A.B. Hammond resumed construction in August, 1894. (17) In 1895, the Astoria and Columbia River Railroad was formed and work was started from Astoria to Goble. (18) The A & CR RR along the Columbia River from Portland to Astoria to Seaside was completed on May 7, 1898. (19) Northern Pacific was the first owner of the line which was located on the south side of the Willamette River. "Between Goble and Portland the Northern Pacific's Seattle to Portland line was used... The A & CR RR was purchased by the Spokane

Portland and Seattle Railroad on February 24, 1911." (20) A.B. Hammond negotiated a 99 year lease of the Northern Pacific tracks between Portland and Goble. On December 19, 1907, Hammond sold the Astoria and Columbia River Railroad to James J. Hill for the Great Northern and Northern Pacific Railroad for \$5 million. (21) The double track railroad bridge across Doane's Lake, the Willamette and Columbia Rivers was completed November 17, 1908. (22) The road was later transferred to the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad by the North Bank Line. Passenger service was discontinued in the 1950's. Today the line carries freight from Portland to the coast. SP & S Railroad was sold and consolidated to become Burlington Northern Railroad on March 3, 1970.

Title Company public records begin August 13, 1906, showing the property owned by Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad.

ABSTRACT RECORD OF SEC. 12, 1N, 1W, LAND BOOK 3, P. 481.

<u>DATE RECORDED</u>	<u>GRANTOR</u>	<u>GRANTEE</u>	<u>BOOK</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
3-8-1866	United States	William Caples	48	357
3-8-1866	United States	Elizabeth Doane & Heirs of Milton Doane	I	387
(12-29-1866 5-20-1908)	United States	W.W. Baker	416	469
3-8-1866	United States	James Johns	I	31
3-30-1883	H.P. Isaacs	N.P. R.R. Company	65	42
4-28-1908	S.P. & S. Co.	N.P. R.R. Company	417	425

ABSTRACT RECORD OF SEC. 13, 1N, 1W, LAND BOOK 3, P. 482

3-8-1866	United States	Elizabeth Doane & Heirs of Milton Doane	I	387
10-9-1895	United States	O. & C. R.R. Company	229	259
5-20-1908	United States	W.W. Baker	416	469
4-25-1857	W.W. Baker	J.W.L. Scoggins	A	386
6-10-1874	Lloyd Brook	W.A. Scoggins	Y	233
1-20-1879	W.A. Scoggins	J.L. Scoggins	35	253
3-30-1883	John Scoggins	H.P. Isaac	54	233
3-30-1883	H.P. Isaac	N.P. R.R. Company	65	242
3-19-1883	P.J. Mann	N.P. R.R. Company	75	150
8-7-1906	J.P. Mann	S.P. & S. R.R. Company	367	251
8-9-1906	J.F. Watson TR.	S.P. & S. R.R. Company	366	477
4-28-1908	S.P. & S. R.R.	No. Pacific R.R. Co.	417	425

ABSTRACT RECORD OF SEC. 13, 1N, 1W, 9, 11, 12, 13

4-28-1908	S.P. & S. R.R.	No. Pacific R.R. Co.	417	425
2-28-1911	S.P. & S. R.R.	No. Pacific R.R. Co.	529	127
2-5-1913	S.P. & S. R.R.	Standard Oil Co.	617	202
1-29-1915	S.P. & S. R.R.	Union Oil of Calif.		
2-9-1916	S.P. & S. R.R.	No. Pacific R.R. Shell Oil of Calif.		

ABSTRACT RECORD OF SEC. 13, 1N, 1W, 9, 11, 12, 13 (Cont.)

<u>DATE RECORDED</u>	<u>GRANTOR</u>	<u>GRANTEE</u>	<u>BOOK</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
8-30-1916	S.P. & S. R.R.	Standard Oil Co.	717	346
9-15-1916	S.P. & S. R.R.	Shell Oil Co. of Calif.	717	388
9-15-1916	S.P. & S. R.R.	Shell Oil Co. of Calif.	722	73
9-22-1916	Shell Oil/Calif.	Shell Oil Co. of Calif.	715	383
11-15-1916	Shell Oil/Calif.	Shell Oil Co. of Calif.		
3-4-1929	Kennedy Const.	Western Oil & Refining		
4-11-1931	Shell Oil Co.	Standard Oil Company		
12-15-1955	Western Transp.	Port. Gas & Coke Co.		
4-4-1956	S.P. & S. R.R.	Chipman Chemical Co.		
4-4-1956	No. Pacific R.R.	Chipman Chemical Co.		
5-15-1958	Ind. Air.Prod.	Chipman Chemical Co.		
11-3-1939	Allen, Alice B.	Port. Gas & Coke Co.		
9-7-1960	N.W. Natural Gas	Rosenfeld, A.Victor		

ABSTRACT RECORD OF SEC. 13, 1N, 1W, 9, 11, 12, 13, 6

11-30-1961	City of Portland	P.P. & L. Co.		
3-31-1964	S.P. & R.R.	Rosenfeld & Anderson		
3-31-1964	Rosenfeld, A.V.	Rosenfeld & Anderson		
3-31-1964	No. Pac. R.R.	Rosenfeld & Anderson		
4-20-1966	No. Pac. R.R.	Chipman Chemical Co.		
7-19-1966	Pioneer Const.	Tidewater Oil Co.		

ABSTRACT RECORD OF SEC. 13, 1N, 1W, 9, 11, 12, 13, 6, 2

7-27-1967	S.P. & S. R.R.	Chipman Chemical Co.	573	479
4-10-1969	Western Trans.	Schnitzer, Gilbert	671	1706
4-11-1969	Western Trans.	Schnitzer, Gilbert		
8-3-1972	State Land Br.	N.W. Natural Gas	873	775
11-14-1974	Western Trans.	Crown Zellerbach	1015	2078
11-14-1974	Western Trans.	Crown Zellerbach	1015	2075

ABSTRACT RECORD OF SEC. 13, 1N, 1W, 9, 11, 12, 13, 6, 2, 1, 7

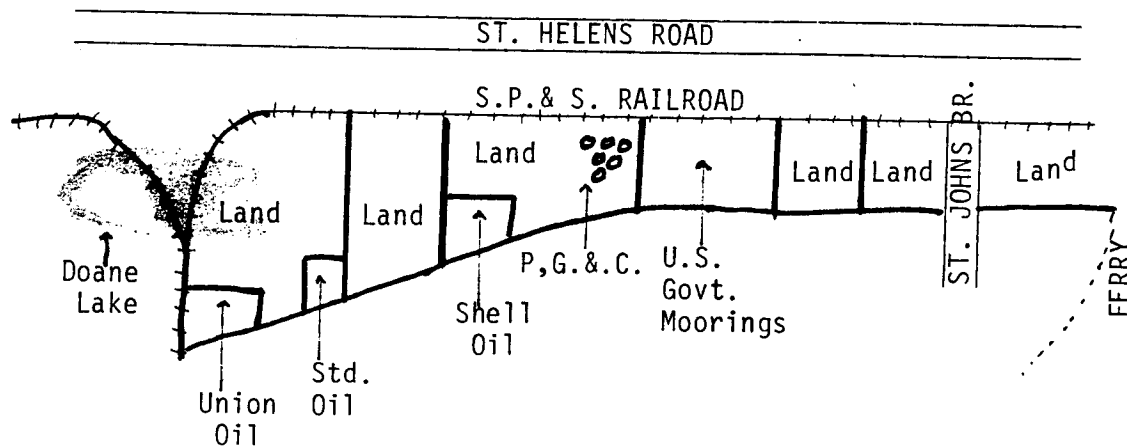
4-3-1978	1st Penn Bank	Penwalt Corp.	1252	2341
4-3-1978	1st Penn Bank	Penwalt Corp.	1252	2346
6-2-1978	City/Portland	Wacker	1268	901
8-17-1978	PDC	Wacker	1288	959
6-29-1984	1st Penn Bank	TR Penwalt Corp.	1757	1980

ABSTRACT RECORD OF TL 1, SEC. 13, 1N, 1W

4-10-69	Western Trans.	Schnitzer, Gilbert	671	1287
4-11-69	Western Trans.	Schnitzer, Gilbert	671	1706
4-11-69	Railway Companies	Anderson/Rosenfeld	671	1724
4-11-69	N.W. Nat. Gas	Western Trans. Co.	671	1761
6-8-78	City of Portland	Anderson, etal		

INDUSTRIAL SITES

In March, 1906, United Railways purchased 250 acres in the Linnton area for \$250,000.00. They subsequently spent millions on behalf of its owners, the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad (James J. Hill Interests) to create an extensive industrial park on landfill dredged from the Willamette River by the Port of Portland. Since that time the Northern Pacific Railroad, forerunner of Burlington Northern, has been the major property owner along the northwest side of the Willamette River. In 1913, Portland Gas and Coke Company moved its manufacturing plant to within Linnton's southern boundary and the large oil refiners began to purchase sites for their extensive shipping and storage needs. (23)

LINNTON DISTRICT MAP (24)

In 1915, with the annexation of Linnton, this area became part of the City of Portland.

As early as 1924, the Peninsula Bridge Company of St. Johns was organized to generate public support for a high bridge across the Willamette River to connect St. Johns with Linnton, replacing a ferry that carried over 1000 vehicles a day. Four years later in November, 1928, voters approved a \$4.2 million bond issue to build the bridge. After two months of heated debate, the County Commissioners voted 2-1 to build a four lane bridge, which was opened during the June, 1931, Rose Festival. (25)

Doane Lake was an overflow lake on the west bank of the Willamette River near the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railroad Bridge. The lake has been filled with material dredged from the Willamette River. (26) Aerial photographs taken between 1967 and 1973 reveal this filling operation.

Aerial photographs also reveal a stand of timber on property adjacent to Doane Lake. This timber was cut between 1964 and 1969.

U.S. GOVERNMENT MOORINGS

The Portland District Moorings are situated on the west bank of the Willamette River (DWG P-101/44C (G-6-3/1)). Parcel "A" was acquired by deed from Thomas L. and Henrietta Elliott on November 7, 1903, for \$6,450.00 and Parcel "B" was acquired by deed June 10, 1905, for \$3,000.00. The tract contains an area of six acres and was outside the corporate limits of the City of Portland at the time of purchase. An additional Parcel "C" containing 5.29 acres was acquired by purchase from the Portland Art Association on November 12, 1940, for \$7,837.00. Parcel "C" was within the City of Portland at time of purchase. Extensive improvements began on the property including construction, filling in and leveling of ground with material dredged from the moorage area. The primary purpose was to provide moorage and material storage facilities for dredges and other floating plant owned and operated by the Portland Engineer District. (27)

This site has been in use since William W. Baker registered his Donation Land Claim in 1851. The town of Springville encompassed this area. The Northern Pacific Railroad acquired the land in 1883. Other owners included the Rev. Thomas Lamb Eliot, a noted Unitarian minister, and Thomas and Henrietta Eliot.

Four major phases of modifications at the Government Moorings occurred between the original purchase and 1970. Due to the late age of the buildings, they are not eligible for National Register of Historic Places designation. (28) The attached appendix lists the buildings situated on the property.

PORTLAND GAS & COKE COMPANY (NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS COMPANY)

The history of Portland Gas and Coke Company dates from January 10, 1859, when the Territorial Legislature granted a franchise to the pioneer enterprise. The first plant was constructed on the Willamette River at the foot of "F" Street, now Flanders. This plant later became the Portland Gas Light Company. (29) In 1910, Barkers C.F. Adams and Abbot L. Mills and their associates sold Portland Gas Company for \$3.5 million to American Power and Light Company and changed its name to Portland Gas and Coke Company. (30) A complete new gas works of advanced design was built on N.W. St. Helens Road and began operation in 1913. The plant produced Gasco Briquettes, which contributed to the areas solid fuel supply. (31) From 1860 to 1906, gas was made from coal. In 1906, due to the rising cost of coal, gas was manufactured from oil. The plant produced benzol and tar bi-products for the next 30 years. In 1953, the petroleum coke ovens, faced with rebuilding and with natural gas in the offing, were shut down and later dismantled. The last full year for gas manufacturing was 1955. Natural gas arrived in 1956. Portland Gas and Coke continued until July, 1958, when the name was changed to Northwest Natural Gas Company. (32)

In 1920, a two story office building was constructed at the Linnton site. Its special features include steeply pitched hip roof with gabled wing, brackets, clock tower, gabled wall dormers, multi-light double-hung windows with lintels and keystones, exposed poured-in place concrete walls and paneled pilasters. This building has recently been granted historic status. (33)

PENNWALT CORPORATION

The forerunner of Pennwalt Corporation was Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company. The 1949 Portland City Directory lists an address at 6400 N.W. Front Avenue. Reservations in deed were issued from Northern Pacific Railway Company, a Wisconsin corporation, to Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company of Washington, a Delaware corporation, recorded January 28, 1953, in Book 1581, Page 237, Document No. 3862, Deed Records, Multnomah County, Oregon. Reservations in deed were issued from Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway Company, to Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company of Washington, recorded December 17, 1952, in Book 1581, Page 295, Document No. 3863, Deed Records, Multnomah County, Oregon.

Pennwalt Corporation produces specialty chemicals, chlorine, dental health products, pharmaceuticals, specialized and precision equipment.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF CALIFORNIA

The Portland 1906 City Directory lists Standard Oil storage tanks located on the riverfront at Portsmouth. In 1909, the tanks were located at wharf #1 at the foot of Van Houten and wharf #2 at the foot of Haven. Oilton was the new location for Standard Oil in 1915. Title Company abstract records indicate a transfer of ownership on February 5, 1913, from Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad to Standard Oil Company, Book 617, Page 202. The 1923 Directory lists Standard Oil plant and warehouse at Oilton and dock at Willbridge.

SHELL OIL COMPANY

A right of way for pipe lines was granted by Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway Company, a Washington corporation, and Northern Pacific Railway Company, a Wisconsin corporation, by deed dated August 23, 1915, in favor of Shell Company of California, Inc., a New York corporation, and conveyed to Shell Company of California by deed dated March 1, 1916, recorded November 13, 1916, in Book 719, Page 356. In addition an easement for pipe lines was granted by these railroads to Shell Company of California, recorded September 15, 1916, in Book 717, Page 388, Deed Records. The 1920 Portland City Directory lists the Shell Oil dock on St. Helens Road. In 1923, the Shell plant was located near Willbridge on Linnton Road.

UNION OIL COMPANY

Title company abstract record shows transfer of property on January 29, 1915, by Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad to Union Oil of California. The book and page are not recorded. The 1914 Portland City Directory lists the Union Oil dock at Willbridge. Later directories list the dock and warehouse at Oilton Station.

CHIPMAN CHEMICAL COMPANY

On April 4, 1956, Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railroad and Northern Pacific Railroad sold property in Section 13 to Chipman Chemical Company. On May 15, 1958, Industrial Air Products sold land to Chipman Chemical Company.

PORTLAND CITY DIRECTORY

The 1934 Portland City Directory lists St. Helens Road beyond N.W. 29th Avenue. The U.S. Government address is 8010 N.W. St. Helens Road and Portland Tug and Barge has an adjacent address of 8444 N.W. St. Helens Road. The 1950 Directory lists Floating Marine Ways Boat Builders and Dry Docks at 8700 N.W. St. Helens Road. As the area became zoned for industry, private residences in the vicinity disappeared between 1934 and 1960. Today, this area is exclusively industrial.

CONCLUSION

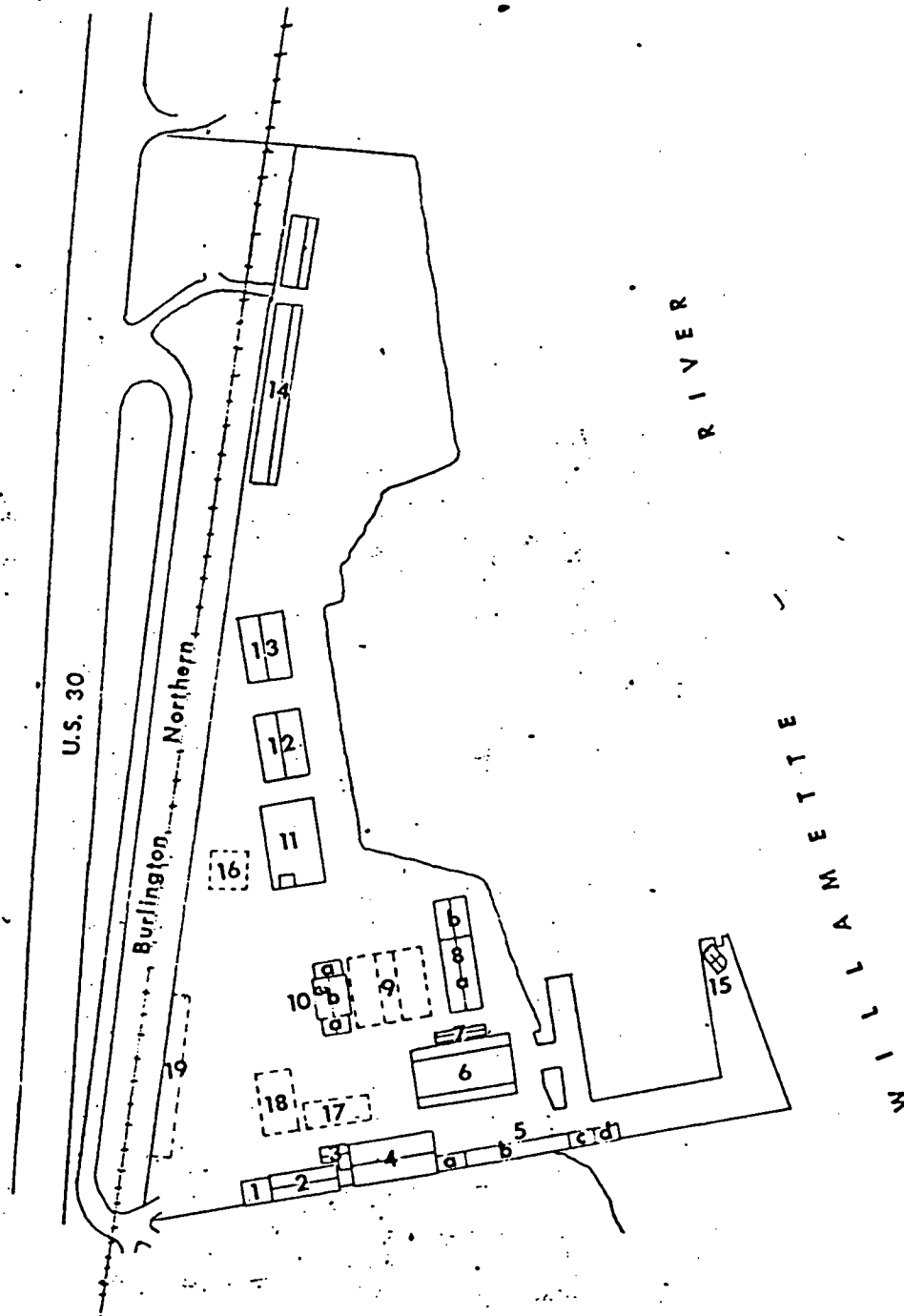
The area between the St. Johns Bridge and Burlington Northern Railroad Bridge has favored town sites and industry throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Land use has been evident from the earliest time, when dense forest covered the hillsides and extended to the river. The Indians utilized the vegetation on the Willamette bottomland. Intensive environmental use began in the 1840's with establishment of town sites, river and land transportation, and shipping on the Willamette River. In 1883, the railroad purchased the land. These lines were land grant roads, subsidized with lands from the public domain, each receiving a 200 foot wide right of way to finance construction. In the early 1900's the railroad sold land to the oil companies. This was followed by sale to industry beginning in 1956.

APPENDIX
U.S. GOVERNMENT MOORINGS
BUILDING KEY

Building
No.

1. Plant section office built in 1938.
2. Plant section engineering office: built before 1924; utilized for pattern storage from 1924 to circa 1940 and as commissary from about 1940 to 1950.
3. Locker building: built in 1938; initially utilized as heating plant and wash room.
4. Welding shop: built before 1924; initially utilized as machine and blacksmith shop.
5. Storage and dock office; section 5a built as storage shed before 1933; section 5b built as automobile and open storage shed in 1935 between sections 5a and 5c; section 5c represents dock office built before 1924, later used as locker room and for utility storage; section 5d was added onto section 5c in 1939 to serve as dock office.
6. Machine shop: built in 1944-1945.
7. Oil and paint storage: original 10' X 40' building constructed before 1928 for oil and paint storage; 10' X 20' addition to west end constructed between 1928 and 1940.
8. Carpenter and electrical shop: section 8a built in 1939 as soils laboratory; section 8b added in 1943.
9. Site of former lumber and steel storage warehouse: original building constructed before 1928; moved and large addition built in 1937; demolished between 1965 and 1967.
10. Garage: section 10b is original structure built as blacksmith shop before 1911; converted to warehouse and garage by 1924; moved to present location in 1937 and sections 10a added shortly afterward.
11. District warehouse: built in 1943.
12. Pattern storage: built in 1938.
13. Material storage: built in 1940.
14. Storage warehouse: built between 1940 and 1945.
15. Dock derrick house: built in 1940.

16. Site of overseer's quarters: built circa 1904, with alterations in 1926 and 1936; demolished between 1963 and 1965.
17. Site of carpenter shop: built before 1925, originally located on site of building 6; moved in 1943; demolished between 1961 and 1963.
18. Site of sales store building: constructed built before 1911 as pattern room; moved in 1937 and annex built, to serve as shipping and receiving warehouse; demolished between 1961 and 1963.
19. Site of flood control storehouse: built before 1936; demolished in 1950.



U.S. Government Moorings

0 100' 200'
scale

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- (5) Ibid, 184.
- (6) Ibid, 231-234.
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- (24) Ibid, 347.
- (25) Ibid, 347-351.
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